

Tobi Bergman, *Chair*
Terri Cude, *First Vice Chair*
Susan Kent, *Second Vice Chair*
Bob Gormley, *District Manager*



Antony Wong, *Treasurer*
Keen Berger, *Secretary*
Daniel Miller, *Assistant Secretary*

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE

NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

www.cb2manhattan.org

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Greenwich Village ∨ Little Italy ∨ SoHo ∨ NoHo ∨ Hudson Square ∨ Chinatown ∨ Gansevoort Market

September 28, 2016

Margaret Forgione
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Dear Commissioner Forgione:

At its Full Board meeting September 22, 2016, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution requesting a traffic study to include granite bike paths on renovated cobblestone streets.

Whereas cobblestone (or Belgian Block) streets are difficult and often unsafe for cyclists to navigate in a city that is promoting bicycle use; and

Whereas the uneven cobblestone streets often have large gaps with separating stones and depressions caused by use, maintenance, and weather elements that add to the peril of riding as well as walking on the stones, especially if using high heel shoes; and

Whereas cobblestone streets become even more perilous when wet; and

Whereas cyclists often ride on sidewalks which is dangerous and illegal to avoid the bumpy and uneven cobblestone surfaces which contributes an additional layer of safety concerns not only for cyclists but pedestrians as well; and

Whereas cobblestone streets contribute to the unique, historical character that defines many Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2) neighborhoods and need to be preserved; and

Whereas other historic neighborhoods such as DUMBO have employed granite bike paths to make cycling safe in cobblestone areas without impeding on the historical character of the cobblestone street; and

Whereas a successful six ft. wide granite bike path has been employed on Varick St. south of Canal St. to Erickson Place, and is used extensively by cyclists; and

Whereas water main breaks and weather elements often contribute to the quick erosion and disintegration of cobblestone blocks, requiring frequent renovation providing windows of opportunity to add a safe cycling alternative to riding on uneven cobblestones; and

Whereas the .NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) already has machinery in place that is programmed to provide the design of granite bike paths when renovating existing cobblestone streets, as performed on the Varick site; and

Whereas there are crosstown cobblestone streets currently planned for renovation between W. Houston St. and W. 10th St., such as on Clarkson St. and Leroy St., that, with the addition of granite bike paths, have the potential to become important links in the bicycle network;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 requests that a cost and viability study be made by DOT to consider the implementation of granite bike paths when plans are made to renovate existing cobblestone (Belgian Block) streets; and

Be it further resolved CB2 asks that the area of crosstown cobblestone streets currently planned for renovation between W. Houston St. and W. 10th St. be included in this study; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 asks that the study also include consideration of the widths of current cobblestone blocks and the viability of adding granite bike paths on narrow streets as are common in Soho; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 recommends that, as part of this study, weather conditions contributing to granite bike path erosion be examined in conjunction with the surface of granite paths and how the granite holds up to wet conditions versus cobblestone materials; and

Be it finally resolved that consideration of the placement of granite paths should take into account the placement of utilities under the street to minimize reconstruction after water main breaks and utility repairs.

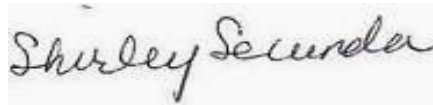
**Vote: Unanimous, with 4 Board Members in favor (K. Berger, J. Gallagher, D. Miller, S. Secunda)
34 Board Members in oppositions**

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Tobi Bergman, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Shirley Secunda, Chair
Traffic & Transportation Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

TB/EM
c:

Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman
Hon. Nydia Velázquez, Congresswoman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Daniel L. Squadron, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, Assembly Member
Hon. Gale Brewer, Man. Borough President
Hon. Corey Johnson, Council Member
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member
Hon. Rosie Mendez, Council Member

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Dear Commissioner Forgione:

At its Full Board meeting September 22, 2016, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in support of proposed bicycle lane on 8th St. bet. 6th Ave. (Ave. of the Americas) and Astor Pl.

Whereas the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) implemented a pedestrian safety project on 8th St. between 6th Ave. (Ave. of the Americas) and Broadway just last year (completed July 31, 2015), and now an imminent resurfacing of that street up to Lafayette St. and Astor Pl. (in Oct. 2016) has presented the opportunity to re-examine improvements in the corridor and conclude that a bike lane is feasible there; and

Whereas currently, the design of the corridor includes two unnecessarily wide parking lanes, 13 ft. on the north side and 11 ft. on the south side, that can contribute ample space for accommodating a bike lane while still retaining enough space for parking on both sides as well as the existing travel lane width of 11 ft; and

Whereas DOT is proposing a bicycle lane on 8th St. bet. Ave. of the Americas (6th Ave.) and Lafayette St./Astor Pl. with the following street configuration up to Broadway from 6th Ave.:

- A 10 ft. curbside parking lane on the north side,
- A 9 ft. curbside parking lane on the south side,
- A 5 ft. bicycle lane next to the parking lane on the north side,
- An 11 ft. travel lane for motor vehicles in the middle,
- Preservation of the curb extensions on both sides; with the same 10 ft. width as before on the north side and a 7 ft. width (one ft. less than before) on the south side, as well as preservation of the two bike corrals on the south side,

and the following configuration from Broadway to Lafayette St. (where the width is only 30 ft. as compared with the 35 ft. wide streetbed from 6th Ave. to Broadway):

- An 8 ft. parking lane on the north side,
- An 8 ft. lane with No Standing and a bus stop on the south side,
- A 14 ft. shared lane in the middle; and

Whereas 12-hour bicycle counts by DOT show increased and very heavy bike use on this corridor: 583 riders on weekdays and 843 on weekend days; and

Whereas bicyclists, including the many delivery people who use this major thoroughfare, presently travel helter skelter anywhere on the street, and a bicycle lane will organize and make their movements safer by providing a clear and dedicated space for cyclists; and

Whereas a bicycle lane on 8th St. will provide direct and convenient access to the newly constructed Astor Pl., and also can serve as a needed link in the bicycle network to 8th Ave. and on to Hudson St. once Greenwich Ave. bicycle improvements (now being studied) are possible; and

Whereas DOT has indicated that it may look into modifying the curb extension on the southeast corner of 8th St. and 5th Ave., but this extension slows down turning motor vehicles, captures their attention and improves their visibility, providing needed safety for pedestrians crossing 8th St. there, an improvement that Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2) had requested for many years and wants to preserve; and

Whereas tour buses proliferate on 8th St. at the 5th Ave. corner, causing congestion all at once that prevents vehicular movement and would also hinder activity on the bicycle lane;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 supports the proposed bicycle lane on 8th St. bet. 6th Ave (Ave. of the Americas) and Astor Pl.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 asks that the curb extension on the southeast corner of 8th St. and 5th Ave. be preserved and preserved as it is; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 requests that DOT thoroughly study and implement alternatives for accommodating and spreading out tour buses to avoid the kind of pressure in hindering other modes of travel that they now produce on 8th St.; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 encourages DOT to employ its Outreach Ambassadors to orient bicyclists on 8th St. to use the new bicycle lane and educate them in the rules that bicyclists should follow to ensure a safe street environment for all.

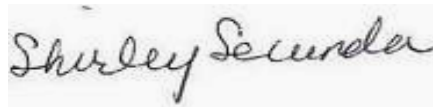
Vote: Unanimous, with 38 Board Members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Tobi Bergman, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Shirley Secunda, Chair
Traffic & Transportation Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

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